

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING ILLINOIS STATE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS COMMANDER WILLIAM M. WOLFF

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2010

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in recognition of the long and noble service of Illinois State Veterans of Foreign Wars Commander William M. Wolff. Commander Wolff began his loyal service to our country as a tank driver in the U.S. Army in Vietnam with the First Squadron, Fourth Armored Cavalry/First Infantry Division.

Commander Wolff was awarded several medals including the Purple Heart. He became a Charter Member of the Bloomingdale, Illinois VFW Post 7539 in 1991, and would earn the status of All-American Post Commander and All-State Post Commander.

To this day, Commander Wolff is extremely active in the community. He currently serves as the Chairperson for the Bloomingdale Septemberfest Commission, and he is a member of the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association, the West Suburban Fire Fighters Association, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the Lions Club.

Madam Speaker and Distinguished Colleagues, please join me in honoring his extraordinary commitment to our nation, and recognizing his celebration that will take place on August 14th.

HONORING THE LATE SENATOR
PAUL DOUGLAS COVERDELL

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 22, 2010

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of the Late Senator from Georgia, Paul D. Coverdell, who died 10 years ago last Sunday.

I considered Paul a dear friend and continue to hold his wife Nancy, who is a constituent of mine, in high regard.

One thing about Paul is that one may have agreed or disagreed with him but one always respected his energy level, his knowledge of the issue, and the way he was so focused on attacking problems.

I first learned about Paul Coverdell in 1974 when my mother sent me a clipping from the Atlanta Journal & Constitution titled "The Gospel According to Paul." In it, I read of a young guy running an unconventional campaign for the State Senate in Atlanta. Rather than just working the good old boys barbecue circuit and going to the back-room power brokers, Paul went directly to the voters. He stood on the side of the road waving signs and knocking on doors. He went directly to the unnamed and untitled citizens to say, "I am Paul Cover-

dell. I would like to be Georgia's next senator. Here is where I stand. Do you have any questions?"

Over the next several decades, Paul's hard work brought him through the ranks. He eventually became one of the most well-connected and influential members of the United States Senate but he never forgot the common man for whom he came to Washington to fight.

Throughout his career, Paul's energy left all who met him in awe.

When Paul was first elected to the Georgia State Senate, he was one of just three Republicans in the body. When I joined the General Assembly just over a decade later, there were only nine. Paul quickly rose through the ranks and became the Senate Republican Leader. Despite the numerical odds against him, Paul refused to be shut out of the arena of ideas.

At that time, Governor Joe Frank Harris introduced a number of bills dealing with DUI laws. The conventional wisdom was that each time you increased the penalty, the number of offenders would go down but Paul bucked the conventional wisdom.

Knowing that a lot of the offenders were addicted to alcohol, Paul introduced and got passed legislation that created a component of mandatory assessment to see if they were addicted. If so, Paul's bill provided a requirement that they seek treatment.

As the eleventh Director of the Peace Corps, Paul promoted farming in Third World countries, economic growth and development, and medical help. Indeed, he saw the formula for world prosperity meant world peace and it was great and important for the United States of America to be leading the way. As Director, Paul sent the first Peace Corps volunteers to Eastern Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Paul went into the most difficult and remote places and countries and said, "How can we help with health care? Are there better farming techniques out there? Is there a way to get cleaner water? What can we do for the children?"

Paul also knew the value of bringing the world to America. That's why he created the "World Wise Schools" program which connected classrooms in the United States with Peace Corps volunteers around the world. During his tenure as Director, 5,000 classrooms nationwide benefitted from the program.

I remember hosting a coffee in my living room for Paul during his campaign for United States Senate. In the middle of a detailed discussion, my daughter Ann who was four years old at the time came running into the living room and crashed through the circle of adults listening to a very dignified U.S. senatorial candidate. She had been playing out in the backyard with all the other children, and she said, "Mom and Dad, I feel of the slide, and I hurt my heinie and all the other kids are laughing at me."

The room full of grown-ups fell silent; and all eyes went to the little girl who was at the foot of this soon-to-be U.S. Senator, a very dignified and somewhat sophisticated man and a tad old-fashioned in his mannerisms, and he

looked down at her and smiled. It said it all. Everything was fine, and the little girl got herself back together and ran back out to the yard with the rest of the kids.

Madam Speaker, that was the grace and charm of Paul Coverdell. Here is a man with a world view but who could look at a 4-year-old girl and say, "everything is okay." That is what made Paul Coverdell special. It was the "Coverdell Dignity" and Paul carried that dignity and that gentlemanly manner with him everywhere he went.

As a United States Senator, Paul fought tirelessly for Georgia's veterans and for our military bases especially Fort Stewart in my district. He was also an amazing advocate for agriculture—the backbone of Georgia's economy. In my South Georgia district, many farmers referred to him lovingly as "Senator Cloverdale."

Madam Speaker, Paul Coverdell had the uncanny ability to not just have an opinion on every issue but to have a thought, an idea and a consequential action. He was a man of action.

I learned a lot from Senator Paul Coverdell. One thing I learned, although he was one of the fiercest Republicans I've ever known, Paul showed everyone by instruction to never put politics over policy.

I remember being a young member of the General Assembly when then-State Senator Julian Bond stepped down to run for the congressional seat now held by the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. LEWIS. Paul Coverdell was one of the men in the Georgia Senate who stood up and gave a great farewell speech for Mr. Bond.

I remember watching that and saying, "here is a liberal Democrat and the conservative Republican leader of the State. What is he doing?" I knew there was a lesson to be had. Bipartisanship and civility is important and you should never let politics rule over policy.

A week before he died, Paul called me at home on a Sunday. We had an issue in my district with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and we kind of got off path. He said, "Jack, I think we are a little out of synch here. I just want to make sure that you and I are okay on this."

That was typical Coverdell. I think so many of us, including me, would have said, "Alright, you are way off base. I am right and you are wrong." Not Paul, he made it so that it was just so easy to get along.

In closing, I want to say one last thing about Nancy Coverdell—the love of Paul's life. Paul spoke to me about Nancy often. He bragged on how much better she was than him with real estate. It is a rare man who really privately, one-on-one, takes the time to brag about his wife to another man. It is a sign of a great marriage, a great husband and true love. I have the honor of representing Nancy in Congress and I truly appreciate her sharing Paul's life with me, the State of Georgia and our great Nation.

Paul Coverdell was a good Republican, a great strategist, a great ideas man. He had a

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